

21.02 KEY INFLUENCES

21.02-1 Land Use Themes

The following themes cover the key land use planning considerations for the municipality and as such are reflected throughout the Local Planning Policy Framework:

- Settlement and Housing;
- Environment;
- Economic Development; and
- Infrastructure.

The following identification of the key influences on each of these themes forms the basis for the subsequent objectives, strategies and implementation in Clause 21.04.

21.02-2 Key Influences on the Land Use Themes

The key influences on **SETTLEMENT and HOUSING** within Mildura Rural City include:

- Mildura is one of the fastest growing regional centres in Victoria.
- There is an existing hierarchy of urban centres in the municipality.
- Mildura is the dominant centre that serves a regional catchment extending into New South Wales and South Australia.
- The municipality has experienced very high growth rates over the last 12 years and this trend is forecast to continue.
- The failure to adequately anticipate and provide for population growth can lead to serious distortions in the residential and other land markets.
- 85% of population growth is expected to occur as urban growth in Mildura, Mildura South and Irymple.
- The rate of residential housing construction within the Mildura, Mildura South and Irymple is being constrained by the lack of appropriate stormwater infrastructure.
- Stormwater infrastructure is expensive and requires long times to fund and construct.
- Council needs to recover its expenditure on infrastructure such as drainage works in a timely manner so that it can continue to fund such works
- The staging and location of urban land release should be co-ordinated with Council's infrastructure program.
- The staging and location of urban land release should recognise the need to protect the integrity and functioning of rural and horticultural activity in interface areas.
- Urban salinity and rising groundwater levels are a threat to urban development.
- The municipality's heritage and environmental values can be easily and irreparably damaged by inappropriate development.

The key influences on the **ENVIRONMENT** within Mildura Rural City include:

- The Murray River, which forms Mildura Rural City's northern and eastern municipal boundary, represents a key environmental, economic and social asset.

- Total rainfall is insufficient to sustain horticultural, stock and domestic demand fully and there is high demand on river and stored water to sustain horticulture and domestic needs, particularly in the summer months.
- Extensive development along the river has brought with it a series of problems including: increased salinity and nutrient levels; reduced water availability downstream; out breaks of blue green algae; pollution of the river; changes to flood regimes; the threat of flood waters overtopping levees, and the loss of habitats and flora and fauna species.
- The municipality and the region are experiencing increased salinity, rising water tables and nutrient levels.
- There is an absence of any defined natural surface drainage system within the municipality.
- The municipality contains habitats sensitive to disturbance and unique flora and fauna communities.
- There are large areas of riparian land consisting of red gum forests and black box woodlands that have been damaged by tree removal, intensive recreational visitor and vehicle use, and stock grazing activity.
- There are significant levels and concentrations of pest plants and animals in the municipality.
- There are extensive areas of Mallee dune fields within the municipality.
- Significant areas of the municipality are affected by wind erosion.
- Extensive areas of light highly erodable soils exist throughout the municipality and surrounding region.
- Public parks, reserves and forests play an important role in protecting significant landscape, flora, fauna, cultural and scientific values.
- Many significant aboriginal and non-aboriginal cultural and historic sites can be found on public land within the municipality.
- There is a need to manage issues associated with the interface between public and private land.

The key influences on **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** within Mildura Rural City include:

- The key economic drivers of the municipality include horticultural and agricultural production, tourism, government services, and retail and commercial activities.
- Significant economic potential exists through the extraction of limestone aggregate, gypsum, and salt and from future mineral sands mining.
- Apiculture is an important industry in the region, undertaken over large areas of public land throughout the municipality.
- Both dryland and irrigated horticultural industries have recognised that “clean and green” production is vital to prosper in their export driven industries.
- The commercial and retail centres throughout the municipality have many historical buildings and features that are valued by the community and contribute to the character of the centres.
- The region’s future economic growth will depend largely on the expansion of horticultural and agricultural industries.
- Mildura City Heart, the municipality’s main commercial precinct, serves a wide regional catchment that extends into New South Wales and South Australia.

- Commercial and retail development within the City Heart is dispersed.
- Major future commercial and retail development in Mildura City Heart is encouraged and can be accommodated on vacant sites and through redevelopment and consolidation of existing buildings and parking sites.
- Commercial and retail activities along 15th Street complement and compete with the City Heart.
- 15th Street now hosts the region's major concentration of bulky goods retailing activity.
- There are local commercial centres in each of the Municipality's major townships. In some instances these centres have experienced shop closures in recent years.
- The commercial and retail centres throughout the municipality have many historical buildings and features that are valued by the community and contribute to the character of the centres.

The key influences on **INFRASTRUCTURE** within Mildura Rural City include:

- The municipality is well served by state, regional and local road networks.
- Extensive rail infrastructure, that is primarily utilised to move grain to ports, exists throughout the municipality but is currently under-utilised.
- Mildura Airport is an important regional hub for airline operations.
- Six water authorities provide services within the municipality, including urban water and sewerage services, irrigation services and stock and domestic supply to rural areas.
- Extensive irrigation infrastructure is located within the horticultural districts of the municipality.
- Extensive piped and channelled stock and domestic water supply systems are located throughout the municipality in areas such as Hattah, Nowingi, Carwarp, and the Millewa.
- Substantial grain handling and storage infrastructure exists throughout the municipality.
- Power and communications infrastructure within the municipality is capable of serving foreseeable demand.
- Mildura is serviced by piped natural gas.
- The relocation of the Freight Gate from Mildura CBD.
- The development of a commercial/industrial park at Mildura Airport.